things i said while you were crying by Browneyesparker

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Summary:

She’s the princess of Hawkins and the girls are awful about it because they are terrified of having their queen bee status revoked. They’ve always ruled the school, lowly subjects they are not. Tearing down El is their way to remind themselves they still hold all the cards.

things i said while you were crying

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Fall 1986

you are beautiful no matter what they say, words can't bring us down

"What if everyone's right?" El asks. "What if I'm not normal?"

It's the first day of school and she's been crying on and off since gym had ended.

"Some of the girls made fun of her in P.E today," Jennifer Hayes whispers while she waits for her bus.

Mike is at a loss of what to do. He's dealt with crying El before but not because she's been bullied by mean girls. His first instinct is to go to a pay phone and call his mom or Joyce to come and help.

But before he can do it, El turns to him.

"Why do you like me? I'm not pretty," she says. "Not like Jen or Max. I don't have long hair like Veronica. I'm not blonde like Tiffany and I don't have a big. . ." she gestures to her chest, causing Mike to blush and quickly divert his gaze to a clump of dying flowers. "Like Stacie. . . I'm not even into the same stuff as the other girls are."

"So?" Mike asks. "The stuff the other girls are into is stupid! Like the only reason they like *Top Gun* is because of Tom Cruise. And who knows why they like *Pretty in Pink*. It has the dumbest ending! Don't even get me started on Madonna. You don't want to be like everyone else.

"You would probably like me better."

"Says *who*?" Mike challenges.

"Veronica, Tiffany and Stacie," Eleven lists off, sniffing. "Veronica

says if I looked and acted more like a girl, you would finally ask me out."

Mike wonders how she cannot see to how utterly feminine she really is. With her delicate features and her pixie cut and big eyes, she's already managed to capture the attention of every single guy in school. He remembers how even Jake Perretti would flirt with her at the pool during summer vacation.

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"Oh El," he says aloud. "They're all just jealous because they can see how great you really are. They have to tear you down because it's the only way for them to build themselves up."

Fresh tears leak from her eyes. "I want everyone to like me," she confesses.

He wants everyone to like her too. She deserves it, she deserves the world. Not more cruelty.

She's rubbing her eyes hard. There are mascara streaks all over her cheeks. He reaches out and rubs the inky stains away from her face.

"And people *do* like you," he says, producing a tissue from his pocket. "There's Max and Jennifer. Holly adores you, same with Steve and Jon and Nancy. . ." he ticks off their names one-by-one, saving himself for last. "And I-*I* like you."

A lot.

El gives him a leaky sort of smile. "I like you too, Mike."

"It's their loss, they're missing out on a *great* friend," Mike says.

She leans over and gives him a hug, he holds her tightly. High school is already off to a rough start but they have each other and he knows everything will be okay.

The End

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Author's Note:

I know this was short but I've been struggling with how to execute this story and I've been sick and with my sister and brother-in-law all week. All the same, I hope you enjoyed this tiny little one-shot. I promise my next story in this series will be slightly longer! Or at least I'll try to make it longer anyways.

The song I used for this story is "Beautiful" by Christina Aguilera

Tell me what you think, if you want!